



ARTICLE ALERT

Information Resource Center

August 2011

Serving Iftar Across America

Like Muslims all over the world, U.S. Muslims often visit *halal* restaurants which prepare food in accordance with Islamic dietary laws for *iftar* with family and friends after observing the Ramadan fast from dawn to sundown. The flavors of faraway places typically predominate.



In this photo, *iftar* customers order Mediterranean food at the Ali Baba restaurant in El Cajon, California, near San Diego. Ali Baba

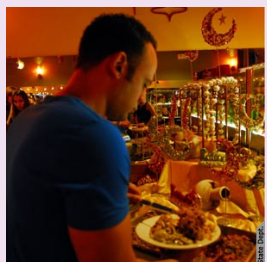
has a tented interior that evokes the feeling of old Baghdad, and owner Othman Kalasho employs an Iraqi chef.



Habib's Cuisine is a very busy restaurant in Dearborn, Michigan, a city with a large population of Arab Americans.

Owned by its

Lebanese-American chef, Habib Bazzi, the restaurant served about 400 *iftar* patrons on the night this photo was taken.



At Tarbouch, a Mediterranean restaurant in the Washington suburb of Arlington, Virginia, an *iftar* customer helps himself to the

buffet. The restaurant serves 150–200 dinners per night, drawing a lively crowd that mostly eats outdoors when the weather permits.



At the Shalimar Café in Redmond, Washington, near Seattle, a mother and her children enjoy a

relaxed *iftar*. Khalid Hafeez, who manages the informal café-style restaurant, says the menu revolves around traditional Pakistani dishes with fresh ingredients and authentic spices.

Ramadan in America— Info Package



◇ As with Muslim communities around the world, Ramadan for American Muslims is marked by fasting and charity. But while fasting is observed one month of the

year, many Muslim Americans make charity and giving back to their communities year-round activities.

◇ Sixty-five percent of the Muslim American population are first-generation immigrants, and 61 percent of the foreign-born arrived in the 1990s or later.

◇ American Muslim Population is estimated 2,595,000 in 2010

◇ Iftar dinners at the White House during Ramadan have become regular occasions since the mid-1990s.

Complete version of info package is available in U.S. Embassy site at: <http://goo.gl/5tSPX>

U.S. Embassy Jakarta Mission Statement

Based on mutual respect and shared values, the U.S.

Mission works with Indonesia to strengthen democracy, sustain the environment, promote prosperity, enhance understanding and ensure security for our people, our nations, and our region.

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Copies of the articles listed in Article Alert are available from the Information Resource Center, Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy Jakarta. Should you wish to receive a photocopy of an article, please complete the ARTICLE ALERT REQUEST FORM (page 4) and return it to us. We will mail or fax the requested articles directly to you at no cost.

DEMOCRACY AND GLOBAL ISSUES

1. Friedman, Lisa **WHICH NATIONS ARE MOST AT RISK FROM CLIMATE CHANGE?** (Scientific American online, posted February 24, 2011)

Global institutions charged with protecting the most vulnerable nations from the effects of climate change are facing a major dilemma of prioritization. Because there is no international consensus for ranking the possibilities and the funds to help cope with climate change are limited, notes the author, countries are already sparring over who will be considered the most vulnerable. Currently available online at <http://goo.gl/EtZAY>

2. Lomborg, Bjorn **A ROADMAP FOR THE PLANET** (Newsweek Magazine online, June 12, 2011)

Environmentalists argue that the industrialized countries of the world have made sizable "withdrawals" on nature's "fixed allowance" -- that our current way of living is selfish and unsustainable. It is a compelling story, but fundamentally wrong, says Lomborg. Would-be catastrophes have regularly been pushed aside throughout human history because of innovation and technological development. In recent decades, air and water quality in developed nations has vastly improved. Lomborg writes that, over the past several hundred years, increasing incomes in the West were matched by increasing pollution; in the 1930s and 1940s, London was more polluted than Beijing, New Delhi, or Mexico City are today. Eventually, however, with increased affluence, developed countries gradually were better able to afford a cleaner environment. Currently available online at <http://goo.gl/gEjIA>

3. Mencimer, Stephanie **MR. PRECEDENT** (Mother Jones, vol. 36, no. 3, May/June 2011, pp 54-66)

Liberal reporter Stephanie Mencimer profiles conservative Indiana attorney James Bopp's efforts to change campaign finance laws. Bopp has been successful in his claims that campaign contributions are a form of free speech protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution. The Supreme Court extended the same free speech protections to corporations in the *Citizens United v. FEC* ruling. Bopp has many cases in the lower courts challenging money limits to campaign contributions. His law firm also has cases in 16 states challenging financial disclosure laws for campaign contributors. Currently available under a different title online at <http://goo.gl/VDplh>

4. Powell, Eric A. **BUILDING THE GREEN-COLLAR ECONOMY** (Discover Magazine, September 2011)

The lure of renewable energy sources is that they help fight climate change. Four experts argue that the transition to a clean economy could also jump-start economic growth and put a new generation to work. Ken Zweibel is director of the George Washington University Solar Institute. Timothy Juliani, director of corporate engagement at the Pew Center on Global Climate Change. Phaedra Ellis-Lamkins is the CEO of Green For All. Chris Busch is policy and program director for the Apollo Alliance. Anne Thompson, chief environmental affairs correspondent for NBC News. Currently available at <http://goo.gl/oLUHX>

ECONOMIC SECURITY

5. Johnson, Chad **TOO BIG TO FAIL OR TOO BIG TO CHANGE?** (Harvard Law School Forum on Corporate Governance and Financial Regulation, June 25, 2011)

The author writes that the investing public has grown frustrated with the lack of prosecutions of senior executives and companies responsible for the subprime mortgage meltdown and the resulting financial crisis of 2008. He notes that most of the settlements that the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the Department of Justice (DoJ) have obtained from targeted firms and their executives have been far too lenient, and have been criticized by federal judges. Johnson lays the blame for the insufficient government action to the lack of funding for the SEC's and DoJ's enforcement operations, and a "revolving-door" environment between the Wall Street firms and the federal agencies responsible for their oversight. He believes that it is up to institutional investors and pension funds to fill the void, and seek redress for shareholders defrauded by corporate misconduct; several major pension funds are currently pursuing legal action against many of the major investment banks at the center of the 2008 financial collapse. Currently available online at <http://goo.gl/gVNPL>

6. Taylor, Alan M. **FINANCIAL REBALANCING ACT: STOP WORRYING ABOUT GLOBAL FLOW OF CAPITAL** (Foreign Affairs, July/August 2011)

According to Alan Taylor, a senior adviser at Morgan Stanley, the capital flow imbalance between developed and emerging economies is already adjusting. After the financial crises of the 1990s, emerging economies adopted policies for saving enormous official reserves as a way to cushion the next crisis. The odd result was that capital flowed from developing countries to wealthier developed countries, a historic reversal. The lower interest rates from the "savings glut" encouraged excessive financial risk taking in the developed countries, contributing to the 2007-2008 crisis and subsequent Great Recession. Having protected their economies through the crisis, the emerging economies are now building reserves more slowly as they spend more money on internal investment, consumption, and social safety nets. Developed countries, meanwhile, are also saving less while spending more on aging populations. As the global savings glut subsides, global interest rates are rising, and the flow of capital is moving more in the direction of the rapidly expanding emerging economies.

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

7. Gurman, Hannah **THE OTHER PLUMBERS UNIT: THE DISSENT CHANNEL OF THE U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT** (Diplomatic History, vol. 35, no. 2, April 2011, pp. 203-231)

The author describes the ways in which U.S. policymakers have worked to minimize dissent within the State Department, despite the misinformed narratives of U.S. foreign policy that make it appear that policy is made within a small circle of important players, including the President and Secretary of State. The author notes that the Dissent Channel, created by the State Department in 1971, provides a means for any Foreign Service officer to write directly to the Secretary of State to register disagreement about decisions made in Washington. All such dissents are marked Top Secret, which minimizes the risk that they will be leaked to the press and embarrass the administration. The author notes that, while the Dissent Channel was created as a result of the deeply unpopular Vietnam war, subsequent administrations have used the Dissent Channel as a means to suppress internal dissent, as recently as the George W. Bush administration, which had to deal with diplomats who opposed the Iraq War.

8. Roberts, Alasdair **THE WIKILEAKS ILLUSION** (Wilson Quarterly, vol. 35, no. 3, Summer 2011, pp. 16-21)

The author, Professor of Law and Public Policy at Suffolk University Law School, notes that a consortium of major news media organizations, including The New York Times, The Guardian, Der Spiegel, Le Monde, and El Pais, began publishing excerpts from a quarter-million U.S. State Department cables obtained by WikiLeaks. In July 2010, The Guardian described the release of the Afghan war documents as "one of the biggest leaks in U.S. military history." Roberts questions whether the outing of the State Department cables by Wikileaks really marks the end of "old-fashioned secrecy." Technological change has caused an explosion in the rate of information production within government agencies, as everywhere else. For example, the leaked State Department cables might have added up to about two gigabytes of data -- one-quarter of an eight-gigabyte memory card. By comparison, it has been estimated that the outgoing Bush White House transferred 77 terabytes of data to the National Archives in 2009; the holdings of other agencies are even larger.

U.S. SOCIETY & VALUES

9. Decker, Juilee **THE MAKING AND MEANING OF PUBLIC ART** (Choice, vol. 48, no. 10, June 2011, pp. 1827-1830, 1832-1841)

To many Americans, public art invokes images of the paintings and murals that appeared in post offices and in other government buildings during the 1930s through the auspices of the Works Progress Administration or, more recently, through various neighborhood and school projects funded by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). Chicago's network of public art is as vast as the city itself. In recent years, these projects have been accompanied with controversy generated by groups opposed to the expenditure of public funds on art, or who object to the subject matter of public art projects. The author, chair of the arts department at Georgetown College, writes that public art has emerged only recently as an academic field. In her essay, she tries to address all aspects of the debate, including funding, care and maintenance/conservation, public art as related to environment, ecological art, earthworks, memory, commemorative events (especially prominent after 9/11 and other national tragedies) and the inevitable controversies.

10. Lewin, Tamar **ONLINE ENTERPRISES GAIN Foothold AS PATH TO A COLLEGE DEGREE** (The York Times, August 25, 2011)

Harvard and Ohio State are not going to disappear any time soon. But a host of new online enterprises are making earning a college degree cheaper, faster and flexible enough to take work experience into account.

As Wikipedia upended the encyclopedia industry and iTunes changed the music business, these businesses have the potential to change higher education. Most are still new and very small, making it hard to locate students who have used them, other than those referred by the businesses themselves. And it is too soon to know which will take off, or what might come along to overtake them. Find out more from <http://goo.gl/TYful>

11. Wahl, Grant **THEY PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE** (Sports Illustrated, June 13, 2011, pp. 54-57)

Soccer has become the world's game except in the U.S. where baseball dominates. Although youth soccer leagues have achieved much popularity in the U.S., baseball teams still predominate and, in the major leagues, foreign players have become an important part of the game. Radio and television broadcasting has further encouraged the popularity of baseball to global audiences. The author notes that this is changing, as U.S. soccer teams have embarked on a global search for dual-passport foreign players who could make a difference for the American side. In 2011, of the sixty players in the U.S. men's soccer pool, at least 34, representing twenty countries, are first- or second-generation Americans or otherwise hold foreign passports, the best known of whom is British-born David Beckham. Currently available online at <http://goo.gl/IHTID>

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- ☐ 1. WHICH NATIONS ARE MOST AT RISK FROM CLIMATE CHANGE?
- ☐ 2. A ROADMAP FOR THE PLANET
- ☐ 3. MR. PRECEDENT
- ☐ 4. BUILDING THE GREEN-COLLAR ECONOMY
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- ☐ 10. ONLINE ENTERPRISES GAIN FOOTHOLD AS PATH TO A COLLEGE DEGREE
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